



Prescott Chamber, Prescott Valley Chamber, Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Gov. Jan Brewer

Thank you, and good afternoon, everyone!

First, let me thank the Prescott Chamber of Commerce and Dave Maurer ... The Prescott valley Chamber -- Marnie Uhl, and Chris Kuknyo ... and the Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce -- for the opportunity to share some thoughts about where we're headed in 2011.

As you probably know, I was originally scheduled to speak to you in January, but, the tragedy in Tucson and other subsequent events postponed these remarks until today.

So, I thank you for your patience. But, I think you'll agree that the message I bring to you this morning was worth the wait.

I say that for several reasons.

First, following my call for a Special Session of the Legislature -- and thanks to the hard work of President Pearce and Speaker Adams -- and thanks to the support of the business community and Chambers of Commerce -- including most of you in this room -- I was able to sign into law the FIRST of my Four Cornerstones.

I believe the Arizona Competitiveness Package is one of the most significant pieces of economic legislation in Arizona state history. It includes codification of the Arizona Commerce Authority as a highly focused, highly privatized entity -- with a deal closing fund that our competitor states have.

It provides for replacing our state enterprise zone laws with immediate tax incentives for quality job creation -- statewide.

And, it includes phased-in tax reform starting in 2014 to address those areas where we're not competitive with other states.

The Competitiveness Package will make Arizona a magnet for business expansion -- relocation -- capital formation -- and investment.

Now, the naysayers out there are telling us to slow down -- they're saying our so-called "gamble" is too great. Well, I have a message for the doom and gloom crowd -- I have no intention of slowing down. This is not the time to be timid. This a time for boldness and it's a time for courage!

The day after I signed that historic legislation -- Intel Corporation announced it was investing more than \$5 billion to start a new chip manufacturing facility at its site in Chandler.

Construction of this new Arizona factory is expected to begin in the middle of this year and, when it's completed in 2013, it'll be the most advanced, high-volume semiconductor manufacturing facility in the world!

THOUSANDS of construction jobs and thousands of permanent manufacturing jobs will be created. Intel could have located anywhere. But there are many reasons it selected Arizona.

Intel officials themselves will tell you, -- and I quote -- "Arizona policies have encouraged Intel to invest billions of dollars in the state and create thousands of high-wage jobs, and we commend the Governor and Arizona's elected leaders for choosing to compete."

I was then able to announce, a short time later ...

-- Gestamp Solar Steel USA is basing its United States headquarters in Arizona, constructing a solar manufacturing facility, creating hundreds of jobs ...

-- PayPal is opening a new facility, expected to create up to 2,000 new jobs ...

-- Goodrich Corporation, has expanded its Goodrich Phoenix Campus with TWO NEW facilities and MORE jobs ...

-- First Solar's expansion -- with a new U.S. manufacturing center in Mesa is -- expected to create 600 quality jobs -- and the potential for many more in the years to come.

Based on a belief in the awesome power of free enterprise -- with private businesses finally freed to compete on the global stage -- we're focused on both urban and rural job creation.

And, let me give you an example of that -- right here in Prescott Valley.

Just last month, the Commerce Authority announced the awarding of \$278,000 to the Prescott Valley Economic Development Foundation to help four private companies expand their operations.

The funding, from the Rural Economic Development Grant Program, is really what the Commerce Authority is all about.

We're helping ensure that business formation and growth stems from EVERY region of the state – and that means everywhere -- Prescott and Prescott Valley – Chino Valley!

As you might know, Travis Bard and Steve Rutherford from the Yavapai Region serve on my Rural Business Advisory Council, and I'm grateful for their contributions to advancing rural communities across our entire state and creating more quality jobs.

Creating more quality jobs is how I intend to devote my last – and best -- years of public service. Wherever they are, employers need a skilled workforce, and employees want a good school system for their children.

Achieving a strong economy for Arizona's second century requires that we act now to strengthen our education system.

So, my SECOND Cornerstone of reform is an education reform plan that reaches every student, in every classroom -- from preschool to college -- in every part of Arizona.

I want all Arizona students to be prepared to succeed in college -- and succeed in careers -- and to lead this state in the next 100 years and beyond.

Children will learn if we expect them to – and, I can tell you this ... we expect them to learn in Arizona!

To reward our best teachers and best principals, to ensure that resources follow success, and to reward schools and colleges for graduating students instead of just enrolling them, Arizona needs a data system that accurately reports the performance of students, teachers and schools.

The education data system we have now is both unreliable and out-of-date -- and that's why my Executive Budget Recommendation for FY 2012 includes a plan to fund a new data system -- and to oversee its development.

Access to better information will help parents support their children -- and this has always been a priority for me.

We've always known that the more involved parents are -- the more successful their students will be.

We have a sound education reform plan with yearly benchmarks that will put us on the path to achieve specific goals by 2020, including doubling the number of college students who complete their studies and receive a four-year degree.

During these times of decreasing state support and rising tuition, the state must continue to explore lower cost higher education models.

These models must include the expansion of Two-Plus-Two programs, more regional campuses with various tuition options, online education, a State College system, and four-year degrees offered by community colleges.

To consistently rank among America's top economic growth states, Arizona needs a modern state government, so my third cornerstone of Reform includes a series of reforms in budgeting, programs and operations.

Arizona needs to reform and modernize its state personnel and retirement systems and re-enforce its status as a Right-to-Work state.

Arizona is saddled with an overly bureaucratic state personnel system from a bygone era.

Simply put, the State of Arizona needs a state personnel system that attracts and retains the best employees and increases employee accountability and agency efficiency!

I'm proposing that Arizona transition to a 21st century state personnel system -- as other states have already done -- a strong selling point for business attraction, retention and expansion.

We value our state and local work force -- but we must ensure that their entitlements are not greater than that of other large employers -- or more than Arizona taxpayers can support.

In addition to personnel and retirement system reforms, we need to strengthen the right of every employee to have an individual relationship with his or her employer. As long as I am Governor, Arizona will remain a Right to Work State.

The United States has a federal government, not a national government.

For the next four years, Arizona will continue to pursue a policy of "Renewed Federalism" -- my fourth Cornerstone of Reform -- that protects the State of Arizona and its citizens against an over-reaching federal government.

On February 10th Attorney General Tom Horne and I filed suit against the federal government due to its constitutional failure to secure the border and protect Arizona citizens against the negative effects of illegal immigration.

With that filing, Arizona both answered the Obama administration's lawsuit regarding SB1070 AND submitted a counterclaim against the federal government.

Our message for the federal government is simple: Use federal resources to combat the cartels that are BREAKING federal law.

Don't attack Arizona, which is helping to ENFORCE federal law. We did not want this fight. We did not start this fight. But now that we're in it, we will not rest until our border is secured.

We're also fighting to be cut loose from unconstitutional -- and unfunded healthcare mandates. And, we're delighted that a Florida U.S. District Judge found that the individual mandate in ObamaCare, which requires everyone to purchase federally-approved health care, is unprecedented and unconstitutional. I knew that from the beginning.

I've been fighting these unconstitutional federal mandates -- including federal MEDICAID mandates -- and, I'll continue to fight whenever Washington says they know what's best for Arizonans.

The federal government has indicated it will be "flexible" with us -- that it will work with us. I'm going to make sure that flexibility is real, and not just lip service.

I'm also going to make sure Arizona uses the opportunity to develop innovative solutions that prioritize the services and populations our citizens value -- AND that we can afford.

I've proposed changes to our Medicaid program that will modernize it and ensure its sustainability for the future.

It will require help from our friends in the federal government -- I'm ready to put their claims of flexibility to the test to implement REAL health care reform.

We've lost the sense of which problems require national solutions and which are best handled at the local level. One way to help our local jurisdictions in their own growth and planning process is to free them from out-dated, unnecessary federal requirements.

The United States Supreme Court recently said local governments may petition to remove themselves from the federal pre-clearance process of the Voting

Rights Act -- and over 60 local jurisdictions in other states have done so -- successfully.

Together, with Secretary Ken Bennett and local jurisdictions in Arizona, we can reward those who have accomplished the mission of the Voting Rights Act. We can allow them to finally end the unnecessary, expensive, and burdensome federal Justice Department oversight of Arizona elections.

I'd like to applaud the recent efforts of Gila and Yavapai Counties, who've already begun this process -- and I encourage you to work with Secretary Bennett. Secretary Bennett and I are committed to helping the counties -- and other eligible local jurisdictions -- accomplish this goal.

Let me close by thanking you for holding fast to the ideals that are going to ensure our future -- ideals that ensure the future of Arizona continues to shine brightly.

May God bless you and your families, and our Great State of Arizona. And may God always bless and protect the United States of America.

Thank you.